

LE MARS PUBLIC LIBRARY

LONG RANGE PLAN
FY 2012-2015
approved 2-6-2012



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Summary:

Beginning in September 2011, a community-based planning committee met and helped develop a three-year strategic plan for the Le Mars Public Library. The final plan is a combination of ideas and effort by the community planning committee, The Library Board of Trustees, the library staff, and library consultant, Bonnie McKewon.

MISSION STATEMENT: *The Le Mars Public Library will continue to provide welcoming physical and virtual spaces, access to innovative library services, quality materials that stimulate the imagination, access to the online world, and encourage lifelong learning by offering opportunities for people of all ages to learn, know, and grow.*

LE MARS PUBLIC LIBRARY CORE VALUES

- 1. Committed to providing quality library collections, services, and programs*
- 2. Committed to excellent customer service*
- 3. Committed to lifelong learning*
- 4. Committed to staying current with technological developments*

INTRODUCTION

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Le Mars Public Library chose to use the planning process outlined in American Library Association (ALA) Strategic Planning for Results. This planning process was developed by the Public Library Association of the ALA to encourage public libraries to define their services in light of the needs of the individual communities being served. Strategic Planning for Results was specifically written for small and medium sized public libraries and emphasizes a streamlined, community-based approach to planning.

The planning process outlined in Strategic Planning for Results is based on the assumption that excellence must be defined locally and that excellence is the result when library services match user needs, interests, and priorities. Consequently, the Strategic Planning for Results process asks key community stakeholders to identify a vision for the community served by the library. This vision is intended to help library planners determine how the library can make a contribution toward achieving the community vision.

Participants

Key community stakeholders for the Le Mars Public Library's planning process formed the Le Mars Public Library Community Planning Committee. This committee included:

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Deb Ahlers

Randy Becker

Mark Bohner

Karen Carlsen

Sandy Curry

Judy DeBoer

Iris Hemmingsen

Rosanne Hoss

Jonathan Hovden

Kacey Hovden

Jean Rowe

Kaye Schipper

Scott Langel

Jessica Rosener

Kim Wick

Pat French

Delana Ihrke

Mary Reynolds

Jill Mitchell

Kathy Moore

Joanne Glamm

Wayne Theeler

Nancy Isebrand

Nancy Probst

Judy Renken

Ann Withrow

Judy Wittkop

Roy Messerole

Pam Jeneary

Deb Tonner

Bonnie Woodke

Carol Schneider

Mary Herbst

Rachel Theeler

Jill Martin

Theresa Magnussen

Kay Luckett

Lorraine Murphy

BOARD MEMBERS

Robbin Hermsen

Derek Bird

Erin Ohrlund

Jan Musson

Kathleen Kipp

Judy Brouwer

Audra Moir

STAFF

Sue Kroesche, Director

Brenda Haverhals

Robin Stevens

Laurie Peters

Cathy Hovden

Lisa Vander Sluis

Michelle Hartman

Glea Bohan

The Le Mars Public Library's planning process was facilitated by Bonnie McKewon, a library consultant with the State Library of Iowa.

COMMUNITY NEEDS

The committee examined the community by using a S.W.O.T. analysis to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

- *High employment*
- *Strong volunteerism*
- *Larger percentage of graduating seniors than national average*
- *Community-owned hospital*
- *City government maintains good relationships*
- *Low cost of living*
- *Economic stability*
- *Strong chamber of commerce*
- *Excellent school system (K12, WITT, ISU Extension, BVU, Catholic, etc)*
- *Media support*
- *Museum, art center, public library*
- *Community pride*
- *Large number of service clubs*
- *Churches*
- *Citizen diversity*
- *Good agricultural economy*
- *4-lane highway*
- *Leisure & sporting activities*
- *More major employers (in addition to Wells)*
- *27-hole golf course*
- *YMCA & walking trails*
- *Quality of life*

COMMUNITY WEAKNESSES

- *Lack of shopping*
- *Not a college town*
- *Appearance of limited financial resources for philanthropy*
- *Lack of county support*
- *Loss of student enrollment*
- *Too close to Sioux City*
- *Language barriers*
- *Library facility—too small*
- *Stagnant population*
- *Rural distance—for bussed kids*
- *Higher than average cost of housing*
- *Too many absentee owners of downtown buildings*
- *Open school enrollment*
- *Out-migration of talent*
- *Apathy within community*
- *Single life—not much social activities*
- *Non-inclusive community*

EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

- *Railroad access*
- *Love of ice cream*
- *Technology advances*
- *Proximity to Sioux City (cultural, health)*
- *We make the food—agriculture & processing*
- *Low interest rates*
- *Proximity to Sioux Falls, Kansas City, Des Moines*
- *Casino \$\$\$--Community Foundation*
- *Ethanol*
- *University satellite sites*
- *Highway bypass*
- *Grocery stores*
- *Improve affordable housing opportunities*
- *Current state admin is pro-education*

EXTERNAL THREATS

- *Too close to Sioux City & Sioux Falls*
- *Lagging economy--state & federal*
- *Worldwide competition for jobs*
- *Sioux City airport*
- *Highway 75/60 bypass*
- *Neighboring college towns*
- *"Hollowing out the middle"*
- *Commuters*
- *Wal-Mart has hurt downtown*
- *Closing SC Post Office*
- *State does not promote western Iowa*
- *Number of bridges & hard surface roads require such maintenance, leaving fewer dollars for other needs*
- *Technology advancements & telecommuting*
- *More non-profits = less property tax revenue*

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

Le Mars will be a city where education is prized and businesses thrive, a place where...

- *Children and teens will enjoy a safe environment to learn, socialize, and succeed*
- *Students will graduate high school with bi-lingual skills*
- *Industry and main street businesses are creating great jobs*
- *Philanthropy will flourish in living legacies*
- *Young people will continue to live, work, and raise their families in this community*
- *Citizens of all ages will benefit from "blue-zone" healthy lifestyles*

COMMUNITY/LIBRARY VISION:

Citizens of all ages will benefit from a 21st century public library facility that leads the way in providing educational & cultural experiences with meaningful social involvement.

PHRASES / EXPRESSIONS FROM PLANNING FOR RESULTS MEETING #1

- *Le Mars will be a blue-zone community (health initiative)*
- *All students will graduate bi-lingual*
- *Will have a populace that is educated and benefits the entire community*
- *A safer place for teens to gather and socialize*
- *Increased industry*
- *Increased job opportunities, tax base, school enrollment*
- *Le Mars Public Library will have a bigger and better facility to lead the way in cultural, educational, and social activities*
- *Le Mars as a place that is a leader in providing living legacies back to the community*
- *Living philanthropy*
- *A place where young adults will return to after college because job opportunities and social opportunities will bring them back*
- *All teens will be involved in wholesome activities*
- *A place with diverse and increased cultural opportunities*
- *Downtown will be filled with thriving businesses, no empty store fronts*

LIBRARY SERVICE PRIORITIES

- 1. STIMULATE IMAGINATION**
- 2. VISIT COMFORTABLE PLACES: VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL SPACES**
- 3. CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD: PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS**
- 4. SATISFY CURIOSITY: LIFELONG LEARNING**

1. STIMULATE IMAGINATION

Service Response: Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them, and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options.

GOAL 1: *Adults will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.*

Objective 1: In each year of the plan, staff will plan and implement programs that are geared for adults at least six times per year

Staff responsibility: Director

Objective 2: By 2014, the library will increase its outreach program to at least one new unreached place in the community such as the Senior Center, hospital or local jail.

Staff responsibility: Director, Assistant director, Circulation librarian

GOAL 2: *Teens (age 12 and older) will have materials and programs that respond to their current interests and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.*

Objective 1: In the fall of 2012, the library will evaluate the existing space for teen materials with a needs assessment.

Responsibility: Library Board of Trustees/Director

Objective 2: In the winter of 2012, the Assistant Children's Librarian job description will be re-written to add responsibility for teen/young adult programming.

Staff responsibility: Director, Le Mars Public Library Board of Trustees

Objective 3: In 2013, a Teen Advisory Board will be established to help determine the course of teen/young adult programming

Staff responsibility: Teen Librarian

Objective 4: In the fall of 2013, the library will facilitate book series discussions and programs for teens in the community. The library will consider partnering with other organizations that currently work with teens such as the Asylum to help facilitate these programs.

Staff responsibility: Teen Librarian

GOAL 3: *Children (ages 6-11) will have programs and materials that respond to their current interests and provide reading, viewing and listening experiences.*

Objective 1: *In the winter of 2012, the library will offer six after school LEGO programs per year for students in third through fifth grades.*

Staff responsibility: Children's Librarians

Objective 2: *Beginning in the fall of the 2012-13 school year, the library will provide one after school program at the beginning of the school year to help children and their parents learn how to use E readers, and download materials from WILBOR.*

Staff responsibility: Children's/Teen Librarians

Objective 3: *In the fall of 2012, the library will evaluate the existing space for children's materials with a needs assessment.*

Staff responsibility: Le Mars Public Library Board of Directors/Director

2. VISIT COMFORTABLE PLACES: VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL SPACES.

SERVICE RESPONSE: *Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read, and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.*

GOAL 1: *The Le Mars Public Library Board of Trustees will determine the specific improvements it needs to make to the library building itself.*

Objective 1: *In the fall of 2012, the Library Board will invite a needs assessment specialist to do phase 2 of our building study.*

Staff responsibility: Le Mars Public Library Board/Director

Objective 2: *By the winter of 2012-13, a building program plan that focuses on the institution's needs and current services will be developed.*

Staff responsibility: Le Mars Library Board/Director

Objective 3: *After the needs assessment is completed, and using the results of that study, the Le Mars Public Library Board of Trustees will form a committee of local citizens to determine needed steps to proceed in a library renewal project.*

This committee will be formed no later than the beginning of 2013.

Staff responsibility: Le Mars Public Library Board/Director

Objective 4: *The Le Mars Public Library Board will use the information it gains from the citizens' committee and needs assessment study to encourage support from City Council and the community. When the City determines projects for its new City Betterment Plan (CBP), the LeMars Public Library Plan will be a part of the community fundraising efforts.*

Staff responsibility: Le Mars Public Library Board/Director

GOAL 2: *A "Teen Space" will be redesigned with age-appropriate seating, signage, carpeting and activities developed for this age group.*

Objective 1: *In April of 2012, the library will hire a part-time librarian whose primary responsibility will be to develop teen programming and activities.
Staff responsibility: Director, Le Mars Public Library Board of Trustees*

Objective 2: *In the fall of 2012, the library will invite teens to provide input for changing a small space into one in which they are comfortable, and can be used for studying, conversation, and reading.
Staff responsibility: Director, Teen Librarian, Children's Librarians*

Objective 3: *In the winter of 2013, the library will utilize colorful displays on the walls and if possible, paint the walls of the teen area with bright colors.
Staff responsibility: Friends, Director, Le Mars Public Library Board*

GOAL 3: *The library will provide an improved virtual space for all library users that will help facilitate record keeping for reading programs.*

Objective 1: *By May of 2012, software will be purchased that would allow participants in summer or winter reading programs to keep track of their reading, make comments, and write reviews.
Staff responsibility: Children's and Teen Librarians, Director*

3. CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD: PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS

SERVICE RESPONSE: *Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to take advantage of the ever growing resources and services available through the internet.*

GOAL 1: *Community members of all ages will have access to library computers for the purposes of educational and career achievement, and participation in a digital world.*

Objective 1: *During each year of this plan, beginning in 2012, the library will increase the number of premium databases offered to the public by at least one to a total of three new databases by 2015.*

Staff responsibility: Assistant Director, Circulation Librarian, Director

Objective 2: *Beginning in FY 2012-13, the Le Mars Library Board will annually review the budget to include hardware and software updates, upgrades and maintenance to the library's public and staff computers.*

Staff responsibility: Director, Le Mars Public Library Board of Trustees

Objective 3: *In the fall of 2015, the library will provide computers for use specifically by teens in the young adult area of the library. Computers will be available for gaming as well as research.*

Staff responsibility: Teen Librarian

Objective 4: *By the fall of 2015, patrons will have specific furnishings available to plug in their laptops or other devices. These will also be available for use as mobile laptop labs, to be used for inventory and classes.*

Staff responsibility: Team of staff including Director, Asst. Director and Teen Librarian

GOAL 2: *Training will be provided to patrons in the use of computers and other technologies to enhance their educational and career outlook, their creative expression and participation in a digital world.*

Objective 1: *Beginning in the fall of 2012, the library will offer computer training classes at a variety of times, at intermediate and beginning levels, and evaluate their success based on attendance and interest in specific classes.*

Staff responsibility: Assistant Director

Objective 2: *Beginning in the winter of 2013, the library will provide short and simple training modules for use by patrons that will be available online.*

Staff responsibility: Assistant Director

GOAL 3: *Patrons of all ages recognize and use their library's website and its resources as an extension of the physical library.*

Objective 1: *By the fall of 2013, the library will continually work to improve its website and will evaluate the website with an online survey of users.*

Staff responsibility: Director, Assistant Director, Children's Librarians

Objective 2: *Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, the library will begin to offer two orientation classes, one each semester, to inform local elementary and middle school students and their parents about the resources available online through the Le Mars Public Library website.*

Staff responsibility: Teen Librarian

4. SATISFY CURIOSITY: LIFE LONG LEARNING

SERVICE RESPONSE: *Children, teens and adults will have the books, media and electronic resources they need to satisfy their curiosity, explore topics of personal interest, and help them succeed and continue to learn throughout their lives.*

GOAL 1: *Children and teens will have the books, media, and electronic resources they need to satisfy their curiosity and explore topics of personal interest.*

Objective 1: *The library will expand and enhance its graphic novel and young adult (YA) collections, digital, audio, e-materials, and print by at least 5% every year.*

Staff responsibility: Children's Librarians

Objective 2: *Beginning in the fall of 2012, staff trained to work with teens and young adults will conduct monthly on-site (school) visits to encourage library use during the school year.*

Staff responsibility Children's/Teen Librarians

Objective 3: *By the winter of 2013, the library will offer book-based reading opportunities by providing one teen focused book club.*

Staff responsibility: Children's/Teen Librarian

GOAL 2: *Adults will have resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and to continue to learn throughout their lives.*

Objective 1: *By the fall of 2012, the library will expand the current monthly book club to include a noon time book discussion group to accommodate adults with varying schedules.*

Staff responsibility: Director

Objective 2: *By the fall of 2013, the library will increase the number of author and 'expert' programs offered to the public.*

Staff responsibility: Director, Assistant Director, Circulation Librarian

Objective 3: *By the fall of 2013, the library will work in partnership with other libraries and community entities to develop programs encouraging the use of libraries.*

Staff responsibility: Director

GOAL 3: *The library will offer classes in current technologies to help older adults gain, maintain, and improve skills.*

Objective 1: *At the beginning of 2013, the library will survey adult computer users to find out what types of computer programs would interest them in order to develop new classes for computer users.*

Staff responsibility: Director, Desk Staff

Objective 2: *By the winter of 2012-13, the library will offer monthly intermediate computer programs for adults.*

Staff responsibility: Assistant Director