

Our Mission:

Enriching the community through lifelong learning and discovery.

Focus Areas

Goals

Outcomes

Investments

A Culture of Collaboration, Leadership, Learning

ACPL actively supports the community's value for promoting life-long learning, economic growth and overall quality of life

- An employer that celebrates the contribution of individuals while fostering a sense of collaboration and sharing
- Increased opportunities for employees to learn
- Improved customer service to support lifelong learning, quality of life and economic growth

- Improve internal communications
- Encourage staff innovation (thinking & action)
- Broaden staff capabilities (capacity)
- Increase diversity of ACPL workforce
- Align resources with strategic direction
- Hire for attitude, train for skill

Community Awareness and Engagement

To broaden ACPL's reach throughout the community through direct connections and strong community partnerships

- ACPL is seen as the cornerstone partner and key collaborator by other community organizations and stakeholder groups
- A more diverse ACPL clientele
- Increased community awareness and satisfaction

- Explore deeper, creative and mutually supportive engagement with existing and potential partners
- Establish shared outcome achievement with all partners
- Work with the Library Foundation/Friends to build a strong donor network
- Assess and understand cultural differences and needs of Allen County residents, including new and immigrant/refugee populations, and seek to meet those needs
- Increase awareness of library services through a variety of platforms including, but not limited to, social media, advertising and staff outreach and mobile service options

Library as Place

To create welcoming and easy-to-use environments at all locations

- Attractive, easy-to-use, flexible facilities and grounds that meet a variety of users' needs for working, learning and playing
- Increased efficiency
- Improved customer service
- Facilities seen as welcoming by all users

- Align hours and services with community need
- Reduce barriers and increase ease of use of programs, services, collections, and internal and external spaces.

Innovative and Adaptable Content and Services

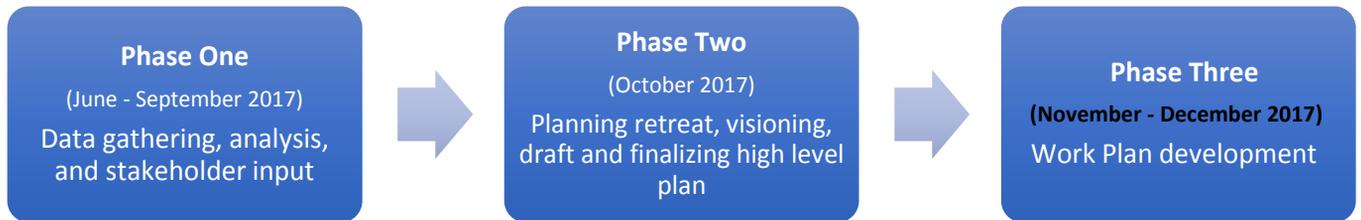
To provide meaningful, innovative, and adaptable content and services

- A responsive organization that can adapt to ever-changing context and embraces opportunities to respond to community needs and wants
- Maximized impact of ACPL resources

- Assess and enhance programming to support community need, with a focus on "intentional" programming
- Assess, enhance and expand outreach services for all ages
- Assess and enhance access to and use of the collection in all formats
- Elevate the public experience for the Lincoln and other ACPL special collections
- Maximize the virtual access experience

Our collaborative approach

Thank you to the thousands of people who provided input into this plan by attending forums and focus groups, completing surveys, and providing additional input and ideas. This new Strategic Plan is a credit to everyone who participated. The process of developing this Plan took six months, involved over 1500 people and evolved through three phases:



Phase One

Community and Library analysis & stakeholder input were the foundations of the planning process and involved showing ACPL staff and Allen County residents, both users and non-users, the possibilities for the Library and gathering input and ideas through community forums and focus groups. Data gathering including benchmarking, demographic analysis, and collection analysis.

In total, twenty-eight stakeholder sessions were conducted for the Allen County Public Library between August 8, 2017 and September 7, 2017. Focus group participants included the general public, local leaders, staff members, and trustees. Participants included frequent library users and non-users and ranged in ages and backgrounds. Overall, 248 stakeholders participated in the discussions regarding the Library's strategic future. In addition to the stakeholder sessions, online surveys were conducted in English and Spanish from August 7 through September 18, 2017. 1257 surveys were completed. Survey participants included a mix of library users and non-users with 81% being regular users (i.e., using the library multiple times a month or more) and the remainder being infrequent to non-users. Survey takers ranged from 12 years of age to over 75. The largest percent of survey takers were between the ages of 26 and 35 (22%). The next largest percent of survey takers were between 55 and 65 years of age (21%).

Phase Two

Visioning, goal setting, and investment planning were accomplished by working with ACPL staff and Allen County community members during a series of planning sessions. Two Strategic Synthesis workshops were conducted on October 2, 2017 and a Strategic Planning Retreat was held on October 4, 2017. During these sessions, key data was reviewed, strategic focus areas were established along with specific goals and related investments required to implement the goals. These three planning sessions led to the development of this document, the high-level Strategic Plan. This plan provides a 5-year path for the ACPL staff and board.

Phase Three

Upon the Library Board of Trustee's approval of this high-level Plan, a detailed Work Plan was created. The Work Plan addresses the specific tasks to be completed to effectively execute the Strategic Plan, including action items, timeline, measurable outcomes, and budget-related information.

Key questions

When we began this process in the summer of 2017, we set out to answer these questions:

1. What does the community want?
2. Where does ACPL want to go?
3. How does ACPL get there?

What does the community want?

Through this process, it was discovered that ACPL is a valuable, broadly attended, highly utilized resource in Allen County. We heard from many people who reinforced the importance of the Library and its importance to the future of Fort Wayne and Allen County.

The community focus groups and online survey explored several topics including the future of the Library and the county, customer service, programming, outreach, marketing, technology, collections, and physical library space. Detailed summaries of all stakeholder feedback were provided as separate documents to ACPL leadership. All stakeholder input, data analysis, and follow-up exploration work led to the strategic foci, goals, and investments outlined on page 1 of this document.

Key Findings

- People use the library in large numbers
- The Library supports life-long learning
- Public libraries support economic growth
- The Library supports local history and genealogical research
- The Library enhances quality of life
- The Library helps those with limited incomes and those of greater means
- Universal trends are impacting the Library and the community

Implementation & Evaluation

With the goal of achieving all outlined goals over the next five years, ACPL administration, staff, and the board of trustees will regularly evaluate their progress and achievements. Objectives set forth in this plan will be accomplished as outlined and will be reviewed on a monthly basis at the Library's board meetings. This balanced and systematic process supports a continually evolving Strategic Plan, with the Work Plan providing the necessary details to best carry out and assess the plan.

The key to ACPL's implementation, evaluation and, ultimately, the success of its Strategic Plan will be:

- A thorough understanding of the Plan as well as active involvement in implementing the Plan by staff and the Board of Trustees
- Frequent and ongoing communication between ACPL administration and staff
- Frequent and ongoing communication between Library staff and the public
- Active collaboration between the Library's board of trustees, administration, staff, outside organizations, and the community

Ultimately, this plan strives to provide quality services to the residents of Allen County. It ventures to engage and elate all ACPL users and deliver the most effective use of taxpayer dollars.